

**Binfield Heath Planning Survey Analysis**  
**March 2016**

Dear Parishioner,

In November 2015 we distributed a short questionnaire throughout the parish by email, newsletter and door-to-door. The purpose was to determine what villagers want Binfield Heath to look like in the future. The results will inform the Parish Council in their recommendations over planning applications. They will be presented at the Annual Parish Meeting in the Scout Hut on Monday 25 April 2016 at 7.45pm where all Parishioners are welcome to participate in the discussions.

Here are our findings:

**General observations**

There were 73 responses to the survey. Not all respondents answered every question and some gave qualified answers. Taking the parish as consisting of 281 households, we appear to have had responses from about 24% of households.

Before looking at the analysis in detail, it is worth taking note of some themes brought to light by residents' responses:

1. The word *character* with regard to Binfield Heath is mentioned in no fewer than 46 answers. Other words used, such as *special*, make it clear that respondents value the village greatly. The rural feel of the village is important to them and almost 70% of respondents want to preserve the fields and woodland between the housing groups in the village. To preserve this character and rural feel, it is felt that unlisted houses of historical or architectural merit, and open spaces between existing housing groupings, should have greater protection and that demolition of these properties should be discouraged wherever possible.
2. Respondents are also keen to retain the Small Village designation of Binfield Heath by restricting the size and type of any development. There are several references to Binfield Heath not ending up like Shiplake.
3. A total of 81% (57) of respondents say they are happy with the existing number of houses in the village.
4. 73% (58) are happy with the size of the existing population.
5. A: 74% (52) say they are in favour of more development.  
B: Of those 52 respondents, 37 (69%) say that any development should be only on a very small scale. And 16 (31%) mention affordable housing, in particular for young, local families.
6. The majority of respondents appear to be happy with the variety of architectural styles that make up Binfield Heath and have no fixed view on how any new build should look, other than 96% (69) saying that it should be in keeping with its immediate surroundings.

7. A small majority (39, 57%) of respondents are in favour of building in gardens. However, concern was expressed that there should be no shoe horning of big houses into small spaces; that there should still be adequate separation between buildings; and that care should be taken to stop any ribbon development, eg. Creating long rows of houses with no open spaces in between (another Shiplake reference).
8. It appears from the responses that some villagers believe the parish council has more power and influence over planning decisions than is actually the case.
9. A small majority, 55% (32) of respondents think that the parish council could do more to publicise planning applications in the village. Perhaps the applications could be displayed separately on village noticeboards in a slightly larger typeface, rather than as now in the body of the council minutes.

### **Summary**

The respondents value highly the distinctive nature of Binfield Heath: it consists of several housing groupings, separated by fields and woodland. They value the character and differing styles of housing, together with the rural nature of the village and its surroundings, with little urbanisation. 81% of respondents believe that the parish should remain at its current size but recognise that, inevitably, there may be a small amount of development such as the extension of existing properties or replacement of a building of no perceived architectural merit or heritage character.

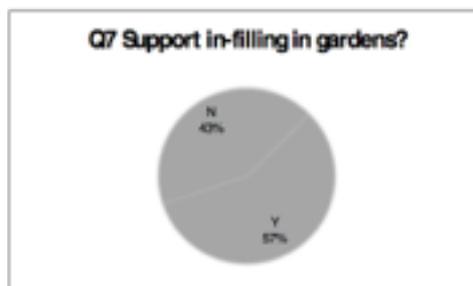
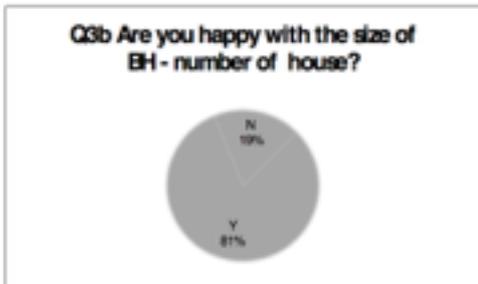
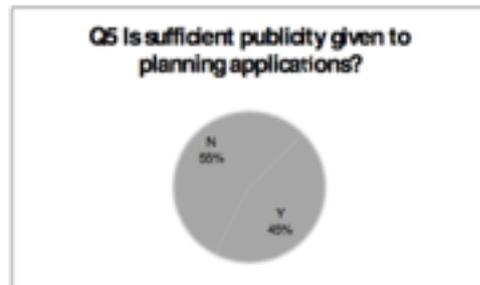
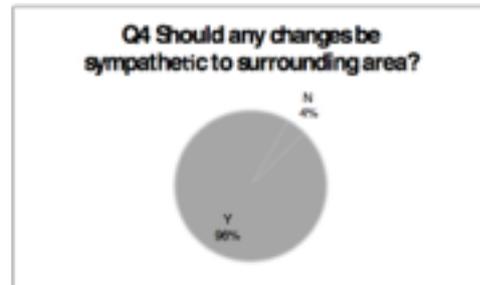
Just over half the respondents (57%) would support small scale development in gardens, but that these should be considered on a case by case basis. It is worth noting that in the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy, Policy CSR1 for small villages only allows infilling on sites up to 0.2 hectares, is of an appropriate scale and is sympathetic to local character and distinctiveness. Nearly 70% of respondents are against any development of the open spaces between existing groupings of houses. Where there is any development, 96% say that it should be sympathetic to the location.

Several respondents expressed surprise at the level of development approved or pending recently and 55% were concerned that sufficient publicity is not given to planning applications. Discussions are underway with SODC over a number of planning and process issues.

## Detailed Responses

The detailed responses are provided below.

Question	Electronic Response		Paper response		Total 6 Jun 15		%		Check
	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	
2 More Development	45	13	7	5	52	18	74%	26%	100%
3a Happy with population size	46	11	12	11	58	22	73%	28%	100%
3b Happy with no houses	44	13	13	0	57	13	81%	19%	100%
4 Should changes be sympathetic	58	1	11	2	69	3	96%	4%	100%
5 Is sufficient publicity given to planning applications	27	32	5	7	32	39	45%	55%	100%
6 Support in-fill between groups	20	39	3	10	23	49	32%	68%	100%
7 Support in-filling in gardens	35	22	4	7	39	29	57%	43%	100%



A date for your diary - the Annual Parish Meeting in the Scout Hut on Monday 25 April 2016 at 7.45pm where all Parishioners are welcome to participate in the discussions and express your views on the future of Binfield Heath.